

1 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
2 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
3 EASTERN DIVISION

4 RAUL NOVOA, *et al.*,

5 *Plaintiffs,*

6 v.

7 THE GEO GROUP, INC.,

8 *Defendant.*

Civil Action No. 5:17-cv-02514

9 DECLARATION OF GAGANDEEP MARWAHA

10 I, GAGANDEEP MARWAHA, declare as follows:

11 1. I am over the age of eighteen, competent to testify in this matter, and do
12 so based on personal knowledge.

13 2. I am a citizen of India and have resided in the United States since I was a
14 child.

15 3. I am a resident of San Bernardino, California, and I have longstanding
16 family and community ties to the area.

17 4. I entered the Adelanto ICE Processing Center (the "Adelanto Facility")
18 as a civil immigration detainee on or around May 15, 2017 and am currently detained
19 there.

20 5. Defendant The GEO Group, Inc. ("GEO") issued me a "Detainee
21 Handbook" when I entered the Adelanto Facility.

6. I learned about the Work Program upon my entry to the Adelanto Facility and requested to take part in the program.

7. I currently work as a porter in the Work Program. As a porter, I work in a crew of approximately twelve detainees. We clean windows, floors, and communal areas in the Adelanto Facility. I work up to seven days per week. I have worked as a porter for about one year.

8. I am currently paid \$1.00 per day for my labor as a porter. However, I was not paid at all during my first one and a half months on the job. During that period, GEO officials required me to work for free before I would be officially hired into the Work Program.

9. GEO supervises and controls all aspects of my work. GEO provides me with the training, safety equipment, and tools I needed to perform my job at the Adelanto Facility. GEO required me to submit applications for my jobs as a porter.

10. GEO officials routinely require detainees to clean areas of the Adelanto Facility for no compensation. On multiple occasions, GEO officials have told me to complete work tasks in various areas of the Adelanto Facility. For example, GEO officials have instructed me to paint a hallway, clean the dining hall after food service, and clean the recreation yard. I was not paid for that labor. Instead, GEO officials would sometimes give me extra food, batteries, or socks for my labor. Other times, I received nothing at all.

1 11. GEO officials also routinely require detainees to clean and maintain the
2 common spaces and showers in my housing unit for no compensation. If we refuse,
3 GEO officials threaten us with disciplinary action until we comply. To my knowledge,
4 detainees are not paid for this work.

5 12. In approximately April 2019, a GEO official instructed me and several
6 other detainees to clean the showers because maggots or worms were coming out of
7 the drains. The GEO officer threatened to transfer us to a different housing unit if we
8 refused. A transfer would isolate us from our community and destroy our sense of
9 safety. We completed the work and were not paid for our labor.

10 13. From my review of the Detainee Handbook, I understand that detainees
11 who disobey GEO officials or refuse to clean can be subject to disciplinary action,
12 including solitary confinement.

13 14. Because of my detainee status, GEO does not permit me to seek
14 employment from another employer outside the walls of the Adelanto Facility.

15 15. Regardless of how many hours I work in a day or week, GEO pays me
16 only \$1.00 per day, or nothing at all. I do not earn minimum wage for the work I
17 perform at the Adelanto Facility for GEO.

18 16. I once asked a GEO official whether detainees could be paid more for
19 our labor. The GEO official said that GEO could not pay us more than \$1.00 per day.

20 17. I spend my wages on the daily necessities that GEO fails to provide for
21 me. GEO does not provide detainees with a sufficient quantity or quality of food,

1 clothing, or personal hygiene products. Rather than go without, I have purchased those
2 products from commissary.

3 18. To the best of my knowledge, hundreds of detainees, if not more, take
4 part in the Work Program. I believe that other detainees performed similar work
5 assignments, as well as jobs in the kitchen, laundry, barbershop, and other cleaning and
6 maintenance type jobs. I am not aware of any detainee receiving more than \$1.00 per
7 day for participating in the Work Program.

8
9 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the
10 foregoing is true and correct and based on my personal knowledge.

11
12 Executed in Adelanto, California, on July 26, 2019.

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14 

Gagandeep Marwaha